

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method of operating a system including two or more search providers and a user interface, the method comprising:
 - receiving information from one or more of the search providers directed to query language features supported by the respective search providers;
 - transmitting the information received from the one or more of the search providers to the user interface, ~~allowing the user interface to provide query input fields~~, wherein a certain one or more of ~~the query input fields~~ within the user interface include the information received;
 - receiving user input through the user interface to define a query; parsing the query to define a parse tree; passing the parse tree to at least one of the search providers;
 - transforming the parse tree based on the information received from a one of the search providers; and conducting a search based on the transformed parse tree.
2. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the information received from the one or more of the search providers includes any one or more of data property names, query comparison operators, data object properties, operands for each of the comparison operators, syntactic data types, data value types, or localization information about display strings.
3. (canceled)
4. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein passing the parse tree to at least one of the search providers comprises passing the parse tree by value to one of the search providers.
5. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising electronically transferring at least a portion of the query to one or more other users.

6. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising copying at least a portion of the query to a repository for use by other users.

7. (currently amended) A system comprising:
a graphical user interface having input fields for defining a query;
two or more search providers;
means for interrogating and receiving information indicating one or more query properties from one or more of the search providers;
means for transmitting the information received to the user interface, ~~allowing~~ the user interface ~~populating to populate~~ a certain one or more input fields with the information received;
means for receiving user input through the user interface to define a query;
means for parsing the query to define a first parse tree;
means for passing the parse tree to at least one of the search providers;
means for deriving a second parse tree based on query properties of one of the search providers; and
means for searching a database based on the second parse tree.

8. (original) The system of claim 7, wherein the means for deriving the second parse tree is within one of the two or more search providers.

9. (previously presented) The system of claim 7, wherein the means for searching a database based on the second parse tree is within one of the two or more search providers.

10. (currently amended) A method of operating a system including two or more search providers and a user interface, the method comprising:
receiving information regarding one or more query properties from one or more of the search providers; and

transmitting the information received to the user interface, wherein the information is entered into a ~~pre-determined~~ one or more input fields of the user interface.

11. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, wherein receiving information regarding one or more query properties comprises receiving information regarding any one or more of data object properties; one or more comparison operators, or one or more operands for each of the one or more comparison operators.

12. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the information entered into the one or more input fields of the user interface is displayed in query window of the user interface prior to, and to facilitate, a user's entry of query defining data into remaining, unpopulated input fields.

13. (currently amended) A method of operating a system including two or more search providers and a user interface, the method comprising:
receiving information regarding one or more query properties from one or more of the search providers; and
communicating a query to one or more of the search providers, using a user interface that has included the information received regarding the one or more query properties into one or more input fields defining the query communicated.

14-15. (canceled)

16. (currently amended) A method of operating a system including a user interface and two or more search providers, the method comprising:
passing a parse tree representation of a query to a first one of the search providers;
passing a parse tree representation of the query from the first one of the search providers to a second one of the search providers; and

transforming the parse tree representation of the query from the first one to to target the second one of the search providers, the transformation incorporating query properties requested of, received from, and regarding the second one of the search providers.

17. (currently amended) A computer-implemented method comprising:
receiving a signal indicating invocation of a search or find command;
displaying a graphical user interface in response to receiving the signal;
receiving information regarding one or more query properties from one or more search providers; and
displaying the information received within the graphical user interface, whereby the information displayed facilitates a definition of one or more queries to the one or more search providers.

18-32. (canceled)

33. (currently amended) A method of operating a system including two or more search providers and a user interface, the method comprising:
receiving information regarding one or more query properties from one or more of the search providers;
providing input fields to receive input to define a query, wherein one or more pre-~~determined~~ input fields are populated with the information received;
receiving input to define a query in the remaining unpopulated input fields; and
communicating the query to conduct a search.

34. (currently amended) A method of operating a system including two or more search providers and a user interface, the method comprising:
obtaining information regarding query definition forms of one or more of the search providers;
configuring ~~adapting a portion of~~ the user interface based on the information regarding query definition forms obtained;

~~configuring adapting a portion of~~ the user interface based on the information regarding query definition forms obtained;
displaying the configured ~~adapted~~ user interface; ~~to allow definition of a query~~;
receiving input through the configured user interface to define a query; and
communicating the query to conduct a search.

35. (canceled)

36. (new) The method of claim 13, wherein query properties include query language features supported by one or more of the search providers.

37. (new) The method of claim 13, further comprising inquiring to one or more of the search providers regarding query properties supported by the one or more of the search providers.

38. (new) The method of claim 13, further comprising configuring and displaying the user interface based on the information received regarding the one or more query properties.

39. (new) The method of claim 17, wherein query properties include query language features supported by one or more of the search providers.

40. (new) The method of claim 17, further comprising inquiring to one or more of the search providers regarding query properties supported by the one or more of the search providers.

41. (new) The method of claim 17, further comprising configuring the user interface based on the information received regarding the one or more query properties.

42. (new) The method of claim 33, wherein query properties include query language features supported by one or more of the search providers.

43. (new) The method of claim 33, further comprising inquiring to one or more of the search providers regarding query properties supported by the one or more of the search providers.

44. (new) The method of claim 33, further comprising displaying the populated and unpopulated input fields to a user to facilitate the receiving of input to define a query.

45. (new) The method of claim 34, further comprising inquiring to one or more of the search providers regarding query definition forms supported by the one or more of the search providers.